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Response by official statistics to the Sustainable Development Goals

Bridging the gap: Integrating the measurement of Sustainable Development Goals with existing statistical frameworks

Note by the Statistics Netherlands

Corrigendum

Page 9, after paragraph 30, insert the following:

III. Conclusion

1. This paper aims to look at the possibility of convergence between (i) the proposed SDG indicators which are the outcome of a political process and (ii) existing measurement systems, the CES Framework in particular.

2. First of all, the mapping of the different measurement initiatives was done at the level of themes. From this exercise it can be concluded that, it is obvious that the measurement system as put forward by the CES needs to be expanded. Carefully examining the list of SDG indicator we see that\ population (including key demographic information), transport and mobility as well as human rights (with special focus on women's rights) should be added to the CES framework in order to incorporate important aspects of sustainable development as they were articulated in the open working group. Furthermore, the theme of "leisure", which was included in the CES Recommendations, may be deleted as it seems hardly relevant for the large majority of countries.

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3. Following the CES Recommendations, on the level of indicators a distinction can be made between

(a) core indicators which give information about how a country is doing in terms of its well-being in a specific field, and

(b) policy drivers which give more detailed information on a theme, and tell us how these trends can be influenced.

4. By making this distinction, the long list of proposed SDG indicators can be shortened substantially. In total 30 of the indicators in the SDG list can in this way be considered core indicators. With some indicators added from the CES Recommendations (in those cases where the SDG list did not contain core indicators for a theme), the total number of core indicators amounts to 51 (the specific indicators were mentioned in the previous section). It should be noted that some of the indicators as suggested in the SDG list have greater global relevance, than the ones selected in the CES Recommendations, as the latter group largely focused on sustainable development issues of high-income countries, whereas the Post-2015 agenda explicitly includes developing countries. Furthermore, the list of proposed SDG indicators is closely linked to the outcome of the discussions in the OWG, an important process in which relevant sustainable development challenges, as they are also perceived by the developing countries, were articulated. The CES framework should, in this respect, be seen as a work in progress, in which the views and needs of developing countries need to be carefully elaborated and incorporated. This should be done in close dialogue with those countries, because only then we further the convergence of measurement systems for sustainable development. The CES framework offers a strong conceptual basis for this global convergence, but we also face the challenge to adopt and develop it further, to suit the global need for worldwide comparable SDG indicators.

5. Table 2 shows the number of core indicators that can be derived from the list of proposed SDG indicators and those identified in the CES Recommendations.

Table 2
Number of core indicators in the suggested system (with number of indicators derived from the proposed SDG indicator list and the CES Recommendations)

Theme	*SDG*	*CES*	*Total*
1	1	1	2
2	6	4	10
3	2	1	3
4	0	1	3
5	0	1	1
6	3	0	3
7	1	0	1
8	-	0	0
9	1	2	3
10	4	0	4
11	3	2	5
12	1	1	2
13	2	1	3
14	1	1	2
15	0	1	1
16	2	1	3
17	3	1	4
18	0	1	1
19	0	1	1
20	0	1	1
TOTAL	**30**	**21**	**51**

Note: at a later stage the themes of population, transport and mobility and human rights could be added.

6. This list of core indicators may be a good starting point for an international measurement system on sustainable development and the progress of societies, especially because political consensus on these core indicators may be expected to be larger than in the field of other types of indicators, which are more "policy sensitive".

7. The measurement system can be build up in four steps:

(a) For the 20 CES themes (51 indicators), as well as for population, transport and mobility and human rights (to be expected an additional ten indicators), ca. 60 core indicators can be selected which are most likely widely available;

(b) If for each of these themes, the three most important policy drivers are selected, we will end up with a measurement system of ca. 130 indicators;

(c) The environmental indicators (especially on energy use and emissions) could largely be derived from the SEEA. The UNSD argues that this would enhance the usefulness of the indicators for policy use, as these indicators are "supported by organized information which promotes a detailed understanding of the drivers of change". Besides, the UNSD claims that "the SEEA implementation

can create data efficiencies in the data production process, meaning that indicators are more attainable in data poor environments";

(d) The actual SDG (core) indicators may be seen as a sub-set of the larger system, characterised by the architecture mentioned above (with its distinction between core indicators and policy drivers).